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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom Joins in  
"Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past"  
For Victims of Crime During National  
Crime Victims' Rights Week April 10-16, 2011**

National Crime Victims' Rights Week is a time to honor victims and the advocates of victims' rights. This year's theme - *Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past* - pays tribute to the millions of crime victims who have summoned the strength to rebuild their shattered lives, families, and communities, one step at a time. Similarly, it honors the professionals who have walked alongside these victims, responding to their courage with unwavering commitment and skillful guidance.

Honoring the past means recalling a time, not too many years ago, when victims had no voice in the criminal justice system. Every day, we help victims reshape their futures by addressing the crimes that marred their pasts. We guide victims to needed resources and help to create a justice system that responds to their needs. We are committed to respond to every crime victim with the knowledge, skill, and compassion that they deserve. To most effectively serve victims in the future, we must learn from past successes, foster victims' resilience, and never stop advocating for the rights of crime victims.

Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom commented: *"The Dakota County Attorney's Office first declared its commitment to crime victims in 1977 when we established a Victim/Witness Assistance Program. Since that time, thousands of victims have received non-judgmental support, case specific information, and guidance through the criminal justice system in Dakota County. These services assist victims in recovering from the harm caused by crimes that have adversely impacted them."*

If you or someone you know has been a victim of crime, help is available. For more information regarding crime victims' rights and services, contact Kelly Nicholson, Victim Witness Supervisor, Dakota County Attorney's Office at 651-438-4471, toll free at 1-877-396-6382, or access the Dakota County Attorney's website at [www.dakotacounty.us/attorney](http://www.dakotacounty.us/attorney).